

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR NEWLY ARRIVED
FAMILIES IN N.C. AND PARENTS OF FIRST GENERATION
STUDENTS BORN IN THE U.S.A.

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Abstract

When newly arrived EL students start school in the USA, they will experience countless hours of foreign language enrichment and they will navigate through a school system new to them and their parents. K-12 school systems have ESL programs and support for their students, however, their parents are left aside with the expectation that they can support their students at home with homework and school related routines. Newly arrived families need to know basic information such as the location of the public library or health department as they have to support their students with the enrollment process and homework related tasks. In order to help EL families succeed in this new endeavor, I created a family engagement program in collaboration between the local community college and K-12 system. Parents receive weekly ESL classes provided by community college instructors in a central K-12 school. These are basic introductory English classes that have incorporated school related activities and parental involvement using authentic materials and settings in the community. The use of cognate recognition and images are the main tools used in this class as well as the use of total physical response from the instructor. While parents are receiving classes, their school age children are also invited to come to school and receive tutoring and mentoring that will also help them succeed in school and their new community.

Dedication

This thesis work is dedicated to my beloved family who has encouraged me and supported me throughout my graduation studies, specially to my husband and sons who are my strength in everything I do. To my ESL students whose resilience has inspired me to fulfill my own dreams. And finally to my mother, Profesora Zoila Leon Lopez: mami, esta tesis es para ti.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

New country, new language, new community. When newly arrived EL students start school in the USA, their lives will never be the same. They will experience countless hours of foreign language enrichment and they will navigate through a school system new to them and their parents. In my case, meeting my new EL students and their families for the first time is a very important moment as it marks the beginning of a successful partnership between us. This alliance will help them comprehend the structure of the school system in their new community as well as the nuances of learning the English language and many other school subjects. Every time I have new students in the high school I serve, I encourage their families to support them at home in this new endeavor. During the enrollment process, I explain to my students and their parents the basic information regarding the school protocols and procedures. However, these parents also need information about the area we live and they eventually will contact me for other needs such as where to go to the doctor or how to fill out an application.

Parental involvement is key for students' success in school. When non-English speaking families arrive in this country, the parents' priority is to progress by working hard and giving their children the opportunity to receive a first world education. However, their dream changes as they realize that work opportunities are minimal if they don't speak English. At the same time, when they go to school and enroll their children, they most likely receive bilingual assistance from the school staff or from an English speaking acquaintance. Unfortunately, once their EL children start school, the majority of parents give their sole responsibility to the school to educate

their students, with minimal support at home. This behavior may be inherited from their home culture where teachers are highly respected, play an authoritative role and give educational recommendations without asking the parents. Also, when parents are new to this country, their primary need is to find and hold jobs to sustain their family. The resources and opportunities of helping their students at home with school work sadly dissipates. The educational challenges that newcomer parents face is known by the school system and some school districts have taken actions. The leaders of these school districts have realized that the number of minority non-English speaking students enrolled in their schools is growing and it is a non-changing trend. This factor plus the higher educational demands placed in our K-12 programs calls for collaboration between parents and institutions to improve the education of the students who are most at risk of academic failure. As newly arrived migrants, these students and their families face many setbacks such as poverty, disrupted education, language barriers, unstable housing and temporary jobs (MacCracken, 2020).

The focus of my thesis is based on the support that the parents of my ESL students urgently need in our area. I work for a school district in a semi urban area in Eastern North Carolina. Our newly arrived families come from different parts of the world. The majority of these parents work in agricultural settings. Other students and their families have moved here because their parents have been relocated to train in the local pharmaceutical or industrial business. The high school I work for is located less than two miles from our local community college. Even though our community college offers ESL classes for adult learners, we have not had a partnership with them with a program that focuses on newly arrived families. The ESL classes they offer are designed for the community in general and in some instances the students enrolled in these classes have lived in our community for years. Our newly arrived families need

to learn survival English as they become familiar to their new community. This sense of belonging is very important for student success. My K-12 school system and the community college is in need of an established “Family engagement program for newly arrived families in the USA.” The result of this research is a curriculum designed for newly arrived parents so they can support their students at home and become active participants in their children’s education.

This program includes 10 short units of survival English lessons for adults. These units include general information about our city and the main services they might need such as medical clinics, food banks, churches, bilingual tutoring programs and free internet services. This project is designed in a PDF format, hard copy and online version. When the parents enroll their students in a K-12 school, they are invited to attend our family engagement program. The program is designed for evening lessons at the local community college, once a week. Make up sessions are provided or our parents can work online using their cell phones. This program includes a family toolkit that parents can use to support their students at home (Lundy-Ponce, 2010). Simple tips on how to help their students at home in order to establish a balanced home and school routine is the primary focus of this toolkit. Research shows that both, EL students and their parents benefit from acquiring information that they will immediately use in a real life context. Herrera & Murry (2016) point out that “in EFL settings, literature and teaching materials play a significant role in language acquisition, as they can increase students’ motivation for learning and expose learners to authentic language” (p. 85).

Newly arriving families to the USA move with the desire to change their lives, progress and get a better education. Many non-English speaking adults face daily challenges at work and at home. They have low paying jobs and rely on acquaintances to translate for them. Their children are greatly affected because they don’t receive the new language support at home. This

issue has challenged school systems and they are searching for solutions that can benefit their students, parents and school in general. By partnering with local community colleges and implementing ESL family support programs in K-12 schools, parents would feel motivated to take evening adult ESL classes knowing that they will benefit from this classes immediately by utilizing some authentic materials as resources. Becoming active members of their community and advocating for their students is important part of this program as these adult learners adjust to a new country, language and school system. By partnering with local agencies and focusing on the local issues, the establishment of the ESL family engagement program in a K-12 setting will be beneficial to all.

Chapter 2: Literary Review

The United States of America has always been a nation of immigrants. The presence of newcomer families has enriched communities in many ways, from cultural adoptions to bilingualism. Some rural communities have more foreign employees than American citizens and this trend brings new challenges to some school systems. This challenge is also an opportunity to improve services provided to students and parents in general in order to increase literacy and graduation rates. School leaders can take advantage of the diversity that their students have and respond to the unique needs that newcomer families bring. When K-12 school systems partner with community colleges, new opportunities open for postsecondary education for both students and parents. Community colleges in the United States (U.S.) hold an umbrella of educational tracks from dual enrollment to continuing education. Starting with English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, newcomer parents can also start their path towards literacy and bilingualism. Except for the ESL classes, some challenges that minority families face are similar to the challenges that newcomer families have, for example disrupted education, poverty or unstable jobs. The U.S Department of education has paid attention to this trend and has granted federal resources to institutions that offer programs to immigrant and minority populations (MacCracken, 2020).

The Background of Newcomer English Learners, Their Parents and Their First Challenges

When English Learner (EL) students enroll in a school in the U.S., they bring a wide range of first language backgrounds, some academic language, social and personal experiences, as well as a unique reason to attend school. Their perspectives about school and education are as

ample as their understanding of commanding the English language on a daily basis (Calderon, 2007). Some students will experience for the first time a formal education and the majority of newcomer students will be surprised that American teachers are friendly and sensitive to the students' language needs. Meaningful relationships and positive interactions are fundamental for diverse students who need to feel safe at school before starting learning academics (Hammond, 2015). Students find it difficult to share their personal narrative but at the same time, they show resilience and a high level of adaptability. Newcomer students show a tremendous amount of growth in one semester, both linguistically and socially. It is not an easy task to do so, but with proper support from teachers and parents, their adjustment to a new school and country becomes effortless (Calderon, 2007).

Partnership between bilingual personnel and parents is crucial for student success. Newcomer families have to struggle with the stress of job and house seeking; they also need to adjust to a new culture and language. Bilingual school personnel need to establish a strong partnership with these families so parents know what is happening at school (Colorín Colorado, 2012; Robertson, 2020). It is critical to establish relationships between educators, students and their parents who play an important role in their children's education.

The Role of ESL Teachers in a Public School

In a regular school setting, typically there is one ESL teacher who serves the English Language Learner (ELL) school community and there is often only one class that is offered as an elective class. ESL teachers modify their class to meet the needs of the majority of the students, with a limited weekly schedule. More personal instruction is given to newly arrived students during the school day by collaborating or co-teaching with the core teachers at school (Calderon, 2007).

Especially during their first year attending a U.S. school, EL learners and their parents must learn how to be patient and supportive as they navigate the early stages of second language acquisition. Successful EL programs are fostered by qualified ESL teachers, supportive administration, and strong parental involvement (Collier & Thomas, 2014).

ESL teachers also have the task to share different teaching approaches that embrace inclusivity and respect for all students. As classrooms become more linguistically diverse, ESL teachers are the ambassadors that promote tolerance and respect towards emergent English speakers (Colorín Colorado, 2012; Shapiro et al., 2014). In order to best support every newcomer student, ESL teachers must explore inclusive teaching approaches and share their best practices with colleagues. Since every newly arrived student comes to our classrooms with a personal narrative and educational background, it is important that ESL teachers learn as much as they can from their students and their families to better serve them. Moreover, educators give their students and family a clear message of their rights to access to education for children and youth (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

Exploring Some ESL for Adult Programs in the USA

Shapiro et al. (2014) explained that there are many advantages for higher education institutions to foster English language programs for immigrant students. Many schools see these programs as internationalization of their institution. Partnerships between community colleges and local industries that hire international employees is a great venue to establish a formal English as a second language program in their institutions. Also, welcoming international students in English language programs creates a cultural awareness on campus and this is an opportunity for preparing all students to embrace a global culture (p.8).

Through word of mouth, many newcomer adults want to join the evening ESL classes, but they face the challenge of transportation, lack of daycare, or time. These are the main factors that K-12 school systems considered when they established partnerships with the local community colleges (Wilder, 2020). To exemplify, Kidd (2019) pointed out that in North Carolina, Rowan-Cabarrus Community College and Kannapolis City Schools started a partnership in 2019 hosted in the evening by Fred L. Wilson Elementary School, a Spanish language immersion school (Kidd, 2019; Wilder, 2020). Beginning ESL courses were offered twice a week in the evenings and parents took the course at no cost. The idea of this program was to offer ESL courses to the parents and connect these families with the school faculty so they can be involved in their children's education (Kidd, 2019; Wilder, 2020; Zarate, 2007).

While the parents were taking classes, they were offered after school care for their children. In the summer of 2019, seven mothers successfully graduated from their first ESL course and all of them were ready to advance to the second level of ESL lessons (Kidd, 2019). Taking adult classes while their kids were being tutored was beneficial for all. Offering adult ESL classes at schools creates a positive outcome. It benefits newly arrived families' literacy in both languages and parents gain trust and a sense of belonging in their new host country (Wilder, 2020).

It would be ideal to implement ESL family engagement programs in all school districts that have a large population of EL learners. One of the primary goals of any parent moving to a new country is to learn the language, become part of the community and fulfill their dreams of giving their children a better education (Breiseth, Robertson & Lafond, 2011; Colorín Colorado, 2012; Parrish, 2019). In the U.S., many community colleges offer ESL and high school equivalence programs for adults; however, partnering with K-12 schools is still a new quest. This challenging

task can be done by determining the common needs that parents have depending on their first language, their children's grade level and the educational goals that these adults personally have (Breiseth, Robertson & Lafond, 2011). To exemplify, Waller Independent School District through their "Family/ community engagement program" (Waller Independent School District, WISD, 2020) and the "Adult education and family literacy program" at Wharton County Junior College (Wharton County Junior College, WCJC, n.d.) in Texas, have designed different programs for adult English learners based on the parents' individual needs, from non-English speakers to adult learners who need to learn new skills and apply to a better job. ESL courses, adult basic education (ABE), high school equivalency (HSE/GED), citizenship and distance learning are the core programs that WCJC offers to adult learners. WCJC also offers programs that integrate education and training that help adult learners transition into the workforce. All of these programs are offered at no cost (WCJC, n.d.). Waller Independent School District (WISD, 2020), offers a year round program for parents and their vision is "to increase engagement of English learner parents, families, and members of the community through the provision of information, tools, and online resources to improve academic outcomes for English learners" (WISD, 2020). Part of their family engagement activities is hosting a meeting specifically for newly arrived families where adult learners receive counseling, mentoring and technology training. Parents also learn how the school system works. Waller Independent School District has in place a parent-school culturally responsive support. "This shared responsibility seeks what is best for the second language acquisition and academic success of students and families, both individually and collectively" (WISD, 2020). The district family/community engagement program offers a bimonthly "Parent University" program dedicated to teaching adult learners ESL as well as how the school system works, understanding standardized test scores, and

familiarization with college and career readiness programs. Parents also receive information about finances and community resources. One of their goals is “to build parent and family capacity to empower them to become student advocates” (WISD, 2020).

Curriculum Goals and Expectations

Class content is also a major factor in adult education success. Adult learners invest their time acquiring information that is useful in their personal lives and work environment (Parrish, 2019; South Carolina Adult Education Handbook, SCAEH, 2020). They look for classes that are relevant to their real life issues and sacrifice their time to finally receive an education that will help them improve their lives in a better, and more satisfying way (SCAEH, 2020). Zarate (2007) manifested that in order to have a successful family engagement program, ESL and area content teachers, parent liaisons, bilingual parents, and community college instructors need to focus on the specific needs of the newcomer families in their community (p. 7). The best resource for inquiry is the school’s stakeholders. When surveying ESL teachers, counselors and parents about the common questions or needs that newcomer parents have posed, their input can result in the beginning stage of a plan of action (Breiseth, Robertson, & Lafond, 2011). According to Parrish (2019), coordinators need to plan a curriculum that motivates the adult learners to join the class and invest their time attending school. Learners “need to have a voice in our planning and we always need to situate language acquisition in contexts that reflect learners life circumstances and purposes for which they are using English” (p. 186). Programs need to include useful content to adult students that can bring them new opportunities. Small goals motivate students to continue attending school, it brings them new horizons and new possibilities for the adult students and their families (Parrish, 2019).

There are many aspects that must be considered when planning a curriculum for non-English speaking parents. Newly arrived adults have diverse backgrounds; they also bring complex and challenging needs and unique strengths (National Center for Family Literacy and Center for Applied Linguistics, NCFLCAL, 2008; Parrish, 2019; Wilder, 2020). The shared quality that these adults have is that they need to become familiar with the educational system in the U.S. through a family literacy program (Parrish, 2019). According to Zarate (2007), in the planning stages of this program, coordinators and educators should consider and anticipate that some parents might not attend class on a regular basis, some might have an interrupted education, and some other might already speak English, but they need to learn about the school engagement part of the program (Zarate, 2007). Early discussions with the potential students should be planned and the information provided should be clear when parents ask about the class they might join. Anticipating student's questions and giving orientations about the place classes will be given will help adult students feel welcome and comfortable to join a new program (NCFLCAL, 2008).

The curriculum design needs to be supported by English language proficiency standards for adult education. These standards are designed to guarantee that adult English learners receive adequate instruction that meets state adopted content standards (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education, USDEOCTAE, 2016; Parrish, 2019; SCAEH, 2020). These standards are used to create lesson plans that are meaningful and rigorous with the intention to promote the early stages of career goals and possibly secondary education. Implementing these goals at the classroom level ensures that students are being exposed to academic content that can be aligned with other standards such as the college and career readiness standards (USDEOCTAE, 2016; Parrish, 2019; WCJA, n.d.). With these standards in

mind, the lessons for this curriculum will be designed with appropriate scaffolding techniques. From life skills, emergent vocabulary to academic content knowledge, adult students will amplify their vocabulary and use it in real life situations (Short et al. 2018). It is important to mention that due to the diversity and educational background of EL students, some will require a high level of mentoring and support as they develop new English skills. It is anticipated that newcomer students will gain the new language at a different pace due to their specific academic needs (USDEOCTAE, 2016). Emergent English students will start learning the social language first, which is mainly through listening and speaking informally with friends and classmates. When planning a curriculum for beginner students, there should be a continuum from social to academic language (Short, 2018).

A critical component of an ESL lesson is the production of an oral or writing task. After receiving ESL instruction, EL learners should be able to practice what they have learned. The more students practice in the classroom, the more they will be able to master a task and gain confidence to produce spoken or written language outside of the classroom (Calderon, 2007). This is the first step that parents can take to advocate for their students without the need of requesting an interpreter. Small controlled tasks in the classrooms such as filling out school forms, lunch request application or parental notes to school are an excellent first step to English literacy and independent learning situations outside of the classroom (Breiseth, Robertson & Lafond, 2011; WISD, 2020). Moreover, explicit reading comprehension strategies are a vital component in the ESL curriculum. From guided practice and feedback to a gradual release of responsibility, students are made aware of the purpose of each task with the final goal of applying in a real life situation what they have learned in class (Calderon, 2007). Once EL students receive high quality instruction, many are constantly practicing what they have learned

in real life situations. The main focus of lesson delivery for EL parents is that they will acquire basic, yet strong social and literacy skills that they will be able to replicate in an authentic setting (Breiseth, Robertson & Lafond, 2011).

Toolkit and tips for newly arrived parents

Statistics about immigrant students not being able to graduate from high school are impressive. Local and national numbers are concerning for school leaders and teachers and parents need to be aware of these numbers. Parents need to know that their help is crucial for their students' full commitment to their education. Teachers need parental support in order to encourage students to continue what has been taught at school. Expectations and suggestions of how parents can support their students should be shared for newcomer families, ideally in their first language (Robertson, 2019). It is also important to mention that parents may not know that there are services provided for them in their community (Kidd, 2019). Literacy and parenting classes offered by community organizations, ESL classes for adults at the community college and the city library offer programs that parents of ESL students can attend at no cost (Colorín Colorado, 2012).

Some parents with a limited education might feel that they cannot help their students at home with class assignments. By preparing engagement activities and encouraging parents to set a space where their students can do their homework, ask questions about what they did at school and read or tell stories in their mother language are some ways that parents can contribute to their children's literacy journey (Breiseth, Robertson, & Lafond, 2011). Studies show that families involved in home literacy and encouraging their children to read at home are more important than a socioeconomic and cultural background. Also, students attend school

frequently, turn in homework and gain more confidence at school (TESOL International Association, 2018). Engaging the families of EL learners with school related activities creates a positive impact that benefits the school community and performance. There are different ways that schools collaborate with parents, from evening events to help assist with family support to volunteering on extracurricular activities, with the goal to create a welcoming environment to EL families (Breiseth, 2011; TESOL International Association, 2018).

Encouraging families to visit the local library is a great way to bring literacy home. Colorín Colorado (2012) stated that parents may not know that once they get a library card, they can check out books for free. Taking their students to the children or young adult readers area once a week, is an excellent venue to encourage young readers to be lifelong learners (p. 12). Colorín Colorado (2012) also mentioned that families can establish a special day of the week to go to the library, read books that interest them (p.13) and have a special place at home where they can read for pleasure (p.14). Literacy is also encouraged in the parents' first language. Many libraries have a bilingual section or a Spanish section where parents can choose books that they can read to their children. According to Colorín Colorado (2012) "if some parents are not accustomed to reading with their children, introduce them to children's books and model different ways they can read together" (p.13).

Zarate, (2007), mentioned that parents also welcome information beyond the school environment. As newcomer families, they might need services that the community is already providing (p. 7). Places such as Head Start, United Way, community pantries, early childhood programs and organizations that offer training and job possibilities are options that parents can benefit from. Families might be interested in learning about school options for adults or alternate

high school programs and GED certificates (National Center for Family Literacy and Center for Applied Linguistics, 2008).

Benefits of Community Engagement Programs

The main dream of newly arrived parents in the USA is to give their students better opportunities for education. In order to do so, once they settle in a new community, they rely on the advice of family members or acquaintances that speak English to find the closest school (Robertson, 2020; Wilder, 2020). When they enroll their students in school, they appreciate and trust the bilingual school personnel who will help them understand the services their students will be receiving at school and to differentiate facts from myths about how the school system works in the U.S. (Robertson, 2020).

Newcomer families have many needs inside and outside of school, from finding the place where uniforms are sold to taking their students to the doctor for their school health check; they ideally need a person that can speak their same language and possibly do these tasks together (Colorín Colorado, 2012). Family network for regular communication and advocacy can be done by finding family mentors that can support newcomer families during their first semester in a new environment. This mentoring can be between families or just one family member. The mentor is a person who explains certain school procedures, coaches, listens or advocates for the newcomer family (TESOL International Association, 2018). Mentors have to be trained by the ESL teacher or coordinator. The goal of having family mentors volunteering is to help newcomer families acclimate into their new school community (Colorín Colorado, 2012). Working with a group of parents who are engaged in the education of their children brings many benefits. Besides learning about the different aspects of a new school system, by sharing experiences and

personal anecdotes, families have the opportunity to create lifelong friendships. Moreover, a group of parents of different nationalities learn about cultural diversity and different points of view about education and cultural family roles (TESOL International Association, 2018).

Setbacks that Newly Arrived Students and Their Parents Face

Cultural adjustment is a series of phases that every person new to a community experiences. Excitement, cultural shock, disorientation and adjustment to a new community are natural processes that each newcomer student struggles. Besides, parents and students experience family reunification and adjustment to new family members (Shapiro, 2014). Newly arrived families in the U.S. may have been exposed to months of years of hardship and trauma, they might qualify for certain benefits in their new community, but they might be understandably skeptical about receiving them. Some parents believe that there is a vinculum between services and government surveillance that may affect their immigrant status in the U.S.A. (Breiseth, 2020).

Undocumented newly arrived students have a valid reason to be silence about their status and they are cautious about what information they can share with their teachers and classmates. Immigration detention and deportation of a family member is a major concern for them as many have just had that shocking experience (U.S. Department of Education, 2015; Breiseth, 2020). Some students and their parents might not participate in evening programs or be open to receive some help because they need to trust the school staff first before being open to address some sensitive issues. High trained personnel may provide a sensitive insight to their challenges and offer their help when they are ready to receive it (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

Conclusion

Schools have transformed tremendously in the U.S. during this past century. The services provided by K-12 schools have expanded and the focus on a diverse population has increased. Schools leaders have made drastic decisions that benefit the majority of their students (Collier & Thomas 2014). This time it is necessary to focus on partnerships between schools and parents in order to increase home literacy and graduation rates in minorities. Historically, newly arrived families have given their trust to school to educate their children and many times the results have not been successful (Zarate, 2007). There is an urgent need to establish formal programs that newcomer parents can attend in order to become a voice and support for their students in a new country. Some school systems have partnered with community colleges with the common goal of increasing parental support at home (Kidd, 2019; Wilder, 2020). However, there are very few programs that can serve as a guide for creating a curriculum specifically for newcomer parents. Moreover, some programs have been established on a yearly basis around the country but they disappear once coordinators change. There is an absence of a formal plan focused on a long term program for newcomer families or newly arrived students (Zarate, 2007). On the other hand, due to the increase of non-English speakers in K-12 schools, conversations are happening at district levels. ESL teachers, counselors and bilingual personnel are eager to help but they feel they have limitations between teaching and performing their regular job duties (Zarate, 2007). There is a need to establish formal programs for parents of newly arrived students in order to promote bilingualism at home and long term academic success in schools.

Chapter 3: Project Design

The objective of this chapter is to give details about the two portions of the project I will be presenting. There is always room for improvement in the field of helping English Language Learner (ELL) families succeed and reach their primary goal of receiving a first world education. I feel there is an urgent need to encourage parents to become active participants in their students' education by inviting them to attend an English as a Second Language (ESL) class specifically designed for them. Newcomer parents or parents of potential first generation students who will be graduating from high school come from many countries, origins and their maternal language is as diverse as their educational background. Since these parents have a unique educational footprint, the program will focus of the general needs that every newcomer parent has at the moment they enroll their students in a K-12 school. They need to be familiar with general school forms and learn emergent English in order to start communicating with teachers and school staff on a regular basis for the benefit of their students' success. By federal law, all school districts in the U.S.A with non-English speaking students enrolled in their schools have ESL teachers and some schools have bilingual staff members that are the liaison between school and home. Ideally, newcomer families also need to be active participants as they are the primary emotional support for their students.

Teaching theories and researches are a continued subject for inquiry for effective ESL teaching in a culturally and linguistically diverse classroom. My objective is that at the end of the family engagement course, every student will meet their personal goal of learning emergent

English and become active participants in their new community. These families have sacrificed a lot in order to start a new life in a new country. In order to motivate adult students to participate in an evening program, it is important to include in the lessons concepts that will make their life easier in their new community. Besides, the social aspect of being in a classroom sharing similar experiences with other parents is beneficial for them as they can relate with each other.

According to Herrera and Murry (2016), “the daunting task of learning English as a new language is made more manageable when teachers consider, understand, and incorporate the elements of students' biographies that bring them life, laughter and love” (p. 4).

The “Family engagement program for newly arrived families in the U.S.A” is a collection of 10 lessons of basic English that incorporates listening, speaking, reading and writing skills at the basic, entry ESL level. The format of these lessons are a printable PDF document and will be shared in an online as well. The classes will be given in person and they will be delivered in the school their students attend. In each lesson, students will be introduced to their children’s school protocols and they will role play a controlled situation that they might experience in the near future. Parents will also be introduced with school written forms that they will need to fill out on a regular basis. They will also be introduced to what their students’ teachers expect from them to do at home. To illustrate, daily homework, reading and checking grades in PowerSchool are tasks that are new for some parents. For the purpose of this pilot project, the authentic materials included in the lessons are exclusive to one school district but the lessons can be adjusted to other districts.

Newly arrived families need to know the location of the places that provide interpreters such as clinics, banks and churches, they might need services such as internet and food aid. With this in mind, I will elaborate a family toolkit that parents can refer to when they need a service. It

will also include tips that parents can use at home to support their students. Having a study space at home, asking their students how their school day was and reading with them in their native or English language are part of a daily routine that parents can adapt on a regular basis this is the beginning of home literacy and parental engagement. The family toolkit will be a printable PDF document and an online version will be shared with parents as well.

The main goal of this project is to encourage parents to become advocates of their own children in both, their native and English language. Parental support and participation are part of a cultural responsive school. According to Hammond (2015), “in culturally responsive pedagogy, the classroom is a critical container for empowering marginalized students” (p.143). Besides the language barrier, newcomer families bring many unique cultural aspects that should be addressed on a one-on-one case. In some cultures, teenager students are expected to contribute economically to the family. In other cultures, parents play an authoritarian role and their students don’t have a personal opinion about their future (The Center of the Advanced Studies in Child Welfare CASCW). The majority of foreign students come from countries where their teachers are not flexible and are seen as a final authority. These are some examples of the anticipated challenges that the class instructor must consider as an opportunity to integrate additional content for the family toolkit. A variety of teaching strategies will be used in this multicultural class that fit the students’ English level, personality and needs. Herrera & Murry (2016) stated, “given the diversity of the languages and cultures represented in today’s classrooms, as well as the individuality of the educators working in such classrooms, no one method or model can successfully address all challenges in all classrooms” (p. 372).

This project is a collaboration between the local community college and the local K-12 school system. It is the result of the need of having quality adult instruction by community

college professors hosted by K-12 schools. The intention of this program is to offer adult classes to newcomer parents who want to help their students' succeed. With the challenge of not having a babysitter, these classes will be delivered in the evenings. After school care and tutoring will be provided by the host school. This entry level, ESL class is the beginning of an ESL literacy path for adult students who might want to continue taking courses at the community college.

Chapter 4: The Project

The result of this research is a product designed for newly arrived parents that have enrolled their students in a K-12 school system in the USA. These parents are non-English speaking students and would benefit from receiving English as a second language classes so they can support their students at home and become active participants in the community and their children's education.

Introduction

This project is a collaboration between both the local community college and the K-12 system (Figure 4.1). It has been created based on the need that parents and teachers have in order to help their ESL students succeed. This program includes 10 short units of survival English 1 lessons for adults. The curriculum focuses on introductory English lessons that are focused on the recognition of cognates and the use of total physical response. These units include general information about our K-12 school system and the main services parents might need such as medical clinics, food banks, libraries, bilingual tutoring programs as well as the rights and responsibilities they have when living in the USA. This project is designed in a PDF format, hard copy and online version via Google. When the parents enroll their students in a K-12 school, they will be invited to attend our family engagement program (Figure 4.2). They will receive more details via brochure and when reading it online, they can enroll to the class using a link included on the flyer.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gG9URj_eqL4fXP0xaGYNK_AsZGWu4Jv7luEThHxgpQU/edit?usp=sharing



Figure 4.1 Partnering agencies

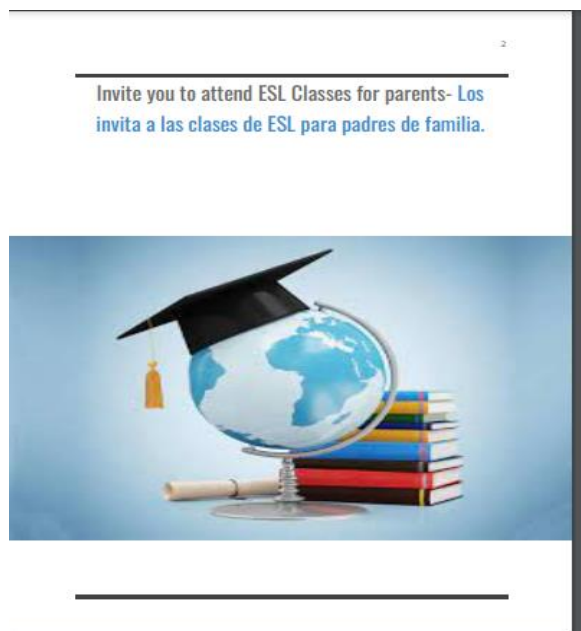


Figure 4.2 Invitation

The program is designed to be taught once a week for two hours in the evening. A high school will host the class and community college instructors will deliver these lessons at no cost for the students. It is anticipated that some parents may miss classes due to their work schedule and make up sessions will be provided to them. In order to avoid missing a class session due to lack of daycare, there will be a classroom dedicated to take care of their K-12 students by helping them with their homework while their parents are taking their classes (Figure 4.3). When parents use the target language right away they will gain confidence and will keep attending their adult ESL class (Figure 4.4).

3

Cuando/ When: Wednesdays/ Los miércoles de 6:00 p.m a 8:00 p.m.

Donde/Where: Nash Central High School: 4279 Nash Central High Rd, Rocky Mount, NC 27804

These free classes are designed for our Nash county school families. Come and learn English with ESL instructors from Nash Community College in one of our Nash schools. We will also provide tutoring for your students at no cost. *Esta clase está diseñada para los padres de familia de nuestras escuelas del condado de Nash. Venga y aprenda inglés con instructores de Nash Community College en una de nuestras escuelas de Nash. Las clases son totalmente gratuitas, también tenemos servicio de tutoría para sus hijos a no costo.*

**¡CLASES
ESL
GRATIS!**

Figure 4.3 Class details



Figure 4.4 Reasons to learn English as a Second Language

This program includes a visual family toolkit that parents can use to support their students at home. Simple tips on how to help their students at home in order to establish a balanced home and school routine is the primary focus of this visual. Secondly, as students are learning about the community resources they can have access in the community, the ESL instructor will encourage parents to go to public places as their homework. For example, getting a library card is part of an assignment. In order to encourage parents to use the resources provided in the toolkit, a bingo card will be given to them and their homework assignments will be to perform certain tasks at home or in the community (Figure 4.5). To keep the class motivated, parents who complete all the tasks will receive a prize at the end of the semester. Encouraging parents to establish family routines and become part of their new community will be beneficial for both adult and young learners.

Name _____ Date _____

3 x 3 Printable Bingo Card

 Braswell Memorial Library	How to Organize a Backpack 	
		 Nash County Public Health EveryWhere, EveryDay, Everybody
USDA My Plate 		Read at  Home

©This printable graphic organizer is from www.teach-nology.com

Figure 4.5 Visual tool kit - bingo card

Lesson Plans

The main goal for this program is to introduce newly arrived parents to the basic English phrases and vocabulary that they will be using at their student's school. Instructional scaffolding and cognate recognition will be used in every lesson. Students will be able to practice their listening, reading, speaking and writing skills in class and will be encouraged to use the language skills they are learning at home and their community. For example, at the time of K-12 enrollment, parents will be asked to complete an application that will require them to write personal information and show immunization records among many documents that they need to present for a final formal enrollment. If their students don't have an immunization record, they will be given a form to take to the health department. Parents need to know the location and the basic vocabulary needed to fulfill these tasks; they will be introduced to helpful phrases and role play some scenarios in class. Adult students will also learn about their rights and responsibilities they have while living in the USA. It is important for them to know that regardless their immigration status, parents and students have rights granted by the US Constitution. Finally, after the students are enrolled in school, parents should be involved in their child's education and know what happens in their school. Parents will be introduced to a phone application that they can use to communicate with their child's teachers. This application allows teachers to send messages in English that will be translated in the parents' language and parents can send a message in their home language and teachers will receive the translated message in English. ESL instructors from the local community college will teach these classes and their lessons are aligned with the Career and College Readiness (CCR) English Language Proficiency Standards for Adult Education:

Lesson: Rights for Everyone Living in the USA

Subject and class level: ESL 1 basic level, 2 hr. class	Topic: Rights of everyone living in the USA
ELP Standards, Career and College Readiness (CCR) objective 1: ELLs can construct meaningful ideas from oral presentations, literary and informational texts through level-appropriate listening, reading and viewing. Reading CCR Anchor 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.	Language skills: Listening Reading Speaking Writing
Daily Lesson Objective: By the end of the day students will be able to represent in drawings some basic rights and responsibilities they are granted when living in the USA by reading, listening and writing on a handout with 80% accuracy.	
ESL strategies: Instructional scaffolding, recognizing cognates, peer tutoring, one-on-one instruction, gradual release model, Total Physical Response (TPR) and class differentiation.	Date taught:

Activity	Description of Activities and Setting	Time
1. Focus and Review	Anticipatory setting: Instructor will remind his students the rules to recognize cognates. Previous knowledge: Students will identify cognates from a vocabulary list given at the beginning of class (Handout 1a). In small groups they will compare their answers and share with their classmates (Handout 1b). Instructor will ask his students what they like about their life in the USA, students will write their answers on handout 1c (Figure 4.6, see Appendix A, Handout #1).	20 minutes
2. Statement of Objective for Student	Today we will talk about the rights we have when living in the USA. We will compare and contrast our opinions by talking about our new life in the USA.	10 minutes
3. Teacher Input	1. Instructor will present the information from “EL Civics for ESL students” website: https://www.elcivics.com/civics-rights-everyone.html, he will read some statements about from the “Rights for everyone living in the Unites States” section. He will show some pictures of rights and responsibilities from the internet.	20 minutes

	2. Instructor will type some rights and responsibilities of all people living in the USA on the smart board.	
4. Guided Practice	I do: Instructor will share handout 2 (Figure 4.7, see Appendix, Handout #2) and explain each right and responsibility using TPR and pictures from the internet. We do: Instructor will ask his students to highlight the new vocabulary words from handout 1 and discuss the possible meaning of each word. Instructor will make the necessary corrections.	20 minutes
5. Independent Practice	You do: 1. Students will choose some rights and responsibilities, draw and color some pictures to exemplify each statement visually. Teacher will be monitoring for understanding and clarification only (if needed). 2. In pairs, students will talk about the rights they have chosen and why.	30 minutes
6. Assessment Methods:	Formative assessment: Instructor will check for understanding by reviewing his students' independent practice and exit ticket. The goal is 80% accuracy.	15 minutes
7. Closure	Exit ticket: On a sticky note, students will write one right and one responsibility while living in the USA that they have learned today. They will post their note on the word wall as they exit the class.	5 minutes

8. Assessment Results:	Critical thinking skills: Based on the formative assessment result, the teacher will determine if it is necessary to re-teach the vocabulary to the entire class or offer small group or one-one-one tutoring sessions. The goal is to schedule a summative assessment (vocabulary quiz) when students have reached 80% understanding of the new vocabulary.		
Student(s) & Modifications/Accommodations: 1. In this multilevel class (basic – advanced level 1 students), students collaborate while learning or reinforcing new concepts. 2. Advanced students will be able to compare and contrast the rights they have in the USA vs. the rights they had in their home country. 3. If needed, newcomer students will use an electronic	Student/Small Group Cooperative learning, peer tutoring	Student/Small Group Summarizing and introducing new points of view	
	Differentiation: One –on-one instruction for newcomer students	Differentiation: Advanced students can contribute to the class conversation by giving examples of personal experiences regarding their rights and responsibilities in the USA.	

translator. At this basic level, the students' native language is permitted to use in class for clarification.		
Materials/Technology: Handout 1 Handout 2 Smartboard Computer Website: https://www.elcivics.com/civics-rights-everyone.html Sticky notes for exit ticket		

Vocabulary

Instructions:

a) In pairs, identify the cognates from this list. Write the Spanish equivalent:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------|
| 1. Responsibilities | _____ |
| 2. Rights | _____ |
| 3. Tax | _____ |
| 4. Profess | _____ |
| 5. Law, legal | _____ |
| 6. Security | _____ |
| 7. Crime | _____ |
| 8. Report | _____ |
| 9. Immigrant | _____ |
| 10. Obey | _____ |
| 11. Religion | _____ |
| 12. Education | _____ |

b) Now, compare your answers with your classmates.

c) What do you like about living in the USA? Mention 3 aspects about your life in the USA:

- | | |
|----|-------|
| 1. | _____ |
| 2. | _____ |
| 3. | _____ |

Figure 4.6 Handout 1

Handout 2

a) Highlight the cognates from today's vocabulary:

Rights	Responsibilities
Fair treatment by the police and in court	Obey all laws
Personal safety and security	Pay taxes
Legal representation	Report crimes
Emergency medical services	Report accidents
Rights of women and children (domestic abuse)	Protect children
Right to receive an education	Enroll children in school
Right to profess a religion (or not)	

b) Choose 5 rights and 5 responsibilities, copy the statements below and draw a picture for each statement:

Rights	Responsibilities
 Example: Right to profess a religion	

Figure 4.7 Handout 2

Lesson: How to Use the Application “Talking Points” to Communicate with Teachers

Subject and class level: ESL 1, basic level, 2 hr. class	Topic: How to use the phone application “Talking Points” to communicate with teachers.
ELP Standards, CCR, objective 4: An ELL can construct level-appropriate oral and written claims and support them with reasoning and evidence. CCR Anchor 1: An ELL can express an opinion about a familiar topic, experience or event.	Language skills: Listening Reading Speaking Writing
Daily Lesson Objective: By the end of the day students will be able to read and fill out certain personal information by logging on an app and sent two texts to their child’s teachers with 100% accuracy. They will also be able to receive and read the teacher’s response.	
ESL strategies: Use of authentic materials (phone app) and TPR. Gradual release model.	Date taught:

Activity	Description of Activities and Setting	Time
1. Focus and Review	For this activity, students were asked to bring their personal cell phone to class, the main contact number at their child’s school. Instructor will remind their students how to contact him. He will ask his students for his personal	10 minutes

	information: name, phone number and email address (they have previously received it), and will type this information on the smart board. He will ask his students to copy the information on handout 3a (Figure 4.8, see Appendix, Handout #3). Secondly, students will also add their personal information on the handout.	
2. Statement of Objective for Student	Today you will learn how to communicate with your child's teacher by downloading an app on your phone. This app translates the teachers' messages in your own language!	5 minutes
3. Teacher Input	1. Instructor will explain to his students the importance of giving a working phone number to their children's teachers and school for a continuous communication. He will share with his students some reasons to stay in touch with their children's teachers and he will type those reasons on the smart board. He will ask his students to give him one more reason. Students will copy that information on handout 3b (Figure 4.8, see Appendix, Handout #3). 2. Instructor will explain to his students that there is an app that parents can use to text their children's teachers. He will use his cell phone and TRP.	30 minutes

4. Guided Practice	I do: Instructor will explain to his students the different ways parents can communicate with teachers. One of them is the “Talking points” phone app. This free app translates the English messages sent by teachers and parents receive the information in their native language. Parents will be able to receive messages, school forms and documents. They will also be able to type on their phones in their native language and teachers will be able to receive their translated message in English. The Instructor will explain to his class that he already has the codes they need in order to start communicating with their children’s teachers. I do: Instructor will ask his students to review the new vocabulary presented on the smart board and handout 3c (Figure 4.8, see Appendix, Handout #3). We do: Instructor will pronounce the new vocabulary words and students will listen and read, they will recognize phone related cognates and the instructor will introduce the rest of the words using his phone and TPR.	30 minutes
5. Independent Practice	You do: Students will search for the “Talking points” app on the Apple store or Google play. Students will	30 minutes

	download the app and enter their children's teacher's code provided by the instructor. If they want to try first texting their instructor, for instructional purposes, they will use the code "6CU1DQ." Once they enter the code on the app, parents will be able to join the teacher(s) class. They will follow the instructions on handout 3d (Figure 4.9, see Appendix, Handout #3). If necessary, students will work with a pair tutor for assistance.	
6. Assessment Methods:	Formative assessments: After students send an introductory text with 100% accuracy, the application will send them back an automatic response asking for personalized information.	10 minutes
7. Closure	ESL parents will answer to the teacher's text by greeting them or personalizing their student's information.	5 minutes
8. Assessment Results:	Students will be using two authentic resources in class (phone device and app), if for any reason a student cannot use their phone to contact his child's teacher, the ESL instructor will create an alternate way to communicate with parents in their home language.	
Student(s) & Modifications/Accommodations:	Student/Small Group Newcomer students	Student/Small Group Advanced students

1. In this multilevel class students collaborate by working in pairs and small groups with peer tutors. 2. Newcomer students will be able to participate in their children's education by communicating with teachers in their native language using a phone application 3. Advanced students will be able to share more personalized information with their children's teachers.	Differentiation: Instructor will monitor and help newcomer students download the free application "Talking points"	Differentiation: Advanced students will have the option to personalize their children's information with detail for student success.
Materials/Technology: Smartboard Computer Handout 3 Phone application for students		

“Talking points,” online version for teachers: <https://app.talkingpts.org/register>

Handout 1

a) Complete the following information:

Teacher's information	My information:
Name:	Name:
Phone number:	Phone number:
Email address:	Email address:
Best time to contact:	Best time to contact

b) It is important to stay in touch/contact with my child's teacher because:

- I will know if there is a school delay
- I will receive information about homework and grades
- I can tell the teacher if my child is sick
- I will know if the bus is running late
- I will know if the school is close (federal days)
- Other reason
- Other reason

c) New vocabulary:

1. Find the cognates
2. Write the meaning of the rest of the words, pay attention to your teacher using his phone:

Send the message _____
 Recent message _____
 See all messages _____
 Documents _____
 Help- Talking point team _____
 Read/See conversation _____
 Start conversation _____
 Paper and pencil icon _____
 Personal profile _____
 Edit profile _____
 Personalized information _____
 Change the language _____

Search the “Talking points-parents” app on the apple store or Google play and follow your teacher's instructions.

Figure 4.8 Handout #3

Lesson: Basic Sickness Symptoms

Subject and class level: ESL 1, basic level, 2 hour class	Topic: Basic sickness symptoms.
ELP Standards, CCR Objective 2. ELLs can participate in level- appropriate oral and written exchanges of information, ideas and analyses, in various social and academic contexts, responding to peer,	Language skills: Listening Reading Speaking Writing

audience or reader comments and questions. CCR Anchor 1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.	
Daily Lesson Objective: By the end of the day students will be able to express sickness by explaining their symptoms to a classmate and write an excuse note using sentence starters with an 80 % accuracy.	
ESL strategies: Total Physical Response (TPR), dialogue journals and role play. Gradual release model.	Date taught:

Activity	Description of Activities and Setting	Time
1. Focus and Review	1. Anticipatory set: Students will start the class greeting each other, teacher will incorporate TPR including the “not feeling well” greetings. 2. Students will review the body parts already learned in a previous class by following their teacher using TPR and singing “Head, shoulders, knees and toes.”	10 minutes
2. Statement of Objective	Today we will learn how to express ourselves when we are not feeling well; we will describe how we feel	5 minutes

for Student	to a classmate and we will also learn how to send an excuse note or text to work or school.	
3. Teacher Input	I do: 1. Teacher will introduce the word/noun of the day, “ache” and explain the uses when talking about body discomfort. He will type the information on the smart board (Noun + prefix “ache”) and give some oral examples using TPR. 2. Teacher will introduce other words related to not feeling well using the smart board, TPR and pictures from the internet if needed.	30 minutes
4. Guided Practice	We do: 1. Teacher will distribute the handout 4 (Figure 4.9, see Appendix, Handout #4) and students will write new nouns following the teacher’s example (Handout 4a). They will read and repeat after the teacher. They will also use TPR. 2. Teachers will read the new vocabulary (Handout 4-b), students will write the cognates they recognize and following the teacher’ TPR they will write the meaning of the new vocabulary in their native language. 3. Teacher will show a video “At the doctor’s office,” (start to minute 1:25). Teacher will share handout 5 (Figure 4.10, see Appendix, Handout #5) and ask	30 minutes

	students to read the dialogue and fill in the blanks (handout 2a). Teacher will play the dialogue two more times. Students will check for corrections by watching the dialogue only (minute 1:33 to 2:34). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T2wwBbrLL7Y	
5. Independent Practice	You do: In pairs, students will role play “at the doctor’s office,” using the new vocabulary words (Handout 4). They will choose 3 symptoms, brainstorm the dialogue and write it down. After practicing, they will present their scene to the class.	30 minutes
6. Assessment Methods:	Formative assessment: The student’s role play will be graded for correct pronunciation and sentence structure. The exit ticket will be graded for understanding.	
7. Closure	Students will write an exit ticket that they will later text to their boss or child’s teacher.	15 minutes
8. Assessment Results:	If students don’t produce good conversations during their role play with 80 % accuracy, teacher will create more dialogues and listening & speaking activities.	
Student(s) & Modifications/Accommodations:	Student/Small Group TPR	Student/Small Group Role play

1. In this multilevel class, students will collaborate and help each other. 2. Newcomer students can use an electronic translator if needed. At this level they can use their native language in class. 3. Advanced students will play the role of pair tutors and will also have the opportunity to write their own conversation and excuse note with a more advanced vocabulary.	Differentiation: TPR is an excellent differentiation resource, if students don't understand or remember the meaning of certain words, they will mimic their classmates or teacher.	Differentiation: For the role play activity, teacher will pair students who will play the role of pair tutor. Teacher will rove around the class for clarification/participation.
Materials/Technology: Smart board Computer Handout 4 and 5 Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T2wwBbrLL7Y		

Handout 1

- a) Follow the formula "word + ache" to create new nouns. Use the words in the box:

Tooth	Head	Stomach
Back	Ear	

- 1) Tooth + ache = Toothache
 2) _____
 3) _____
 4) _____
 5) _____
 6) _____

- b) New vocabulary:

- Find the cognates.
- Look at your teacher and write the meaning on the words.

A fever _____
 A cold _____
 The flu _____
 Nausea _____
 Diarrhea _____
 Sore throat _____
 An infection _____
 A rash _____
 A cut _____
 Dizziness _____
 Symptoms _____
 A sore throat _____

Figure 4.9 Handout 4

Handout 2

At the Doctor's

- a) Listen to the dialogue and fill in the blanks:

Doctor: Good morning Ms. Jones, what seems to be the _____?

Ms. Jones: Well doctor, I've got a _____ and a bad _____.

I've also got a bad _____.

Doctor: How long have you had these _____?

Ms. Jones: About four days now. And I'm feeling really _____ too.

Doctor: It sounds like you got the _____. Take two _____ every two hours. You should also get lots of rest and drink plenty of fluids. If you don't feel _____ in a couple of days, give me a call.

Ms. Jones: Thank you, doctor.

- b) With your partner, choose 3 symptoms from handout 1 and create a conversation between a doctor and a patient. You will present your conversation to the class.

- c) Exit ticket: Write/text a note to your boss or your child's teacher. Follow the sentence model and fill in the blanks with your own information:

Good morning boss	Good morning teacher
(Date) _____	(Date) _____
I'm texting you to let you know that I am not feeling well today. I have a _____.	I'm texting you to let you know that my child _____ (name) is not feeling well today. He/ She has a _____. She/ He will stay at home today. Please excuse my child's absence today.
Please excuse my absence today, thank you!	Thanks!
(Your name) _____	(Your name) _____

Figure 4.10 handout 5

The goal of this community engagement program is to encourage newly arrived parents to become active participants in their children's education. It is an urgent need in many school

systems that employ a small number of certified ESL teachers and where core teachers are monolingual. By offering our newcomer parents free ESL lessons that include the basics of the English language with activities that we know our adult students will be using right away, the benefits of this program will reach our ESL families, students and local school systems.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

Working with newcomer ESL adult students is a complex, yet satisfactory task. Generally, non-English speaking students and their families have more similarities than differences. During their first year of moving to the USA, they are trying to settle in an area where they have to find a stable job and housing. Many times the sense of stability starts when these parents find a supportive school system for them and their children. Many school systems have full time interpreters that can serve these families, but their capacities are limited. When K-12 systems partner with local organizations such as the local community college, public library and health department, the services they provide can be adapted to the needs of our ESL families. Family migration into rural agricultural communities is not a new trend and the services provided to them should be anticipated. It is also known that the primary need of newly arrived parents is to find jobs to sustain their families. They also face educational challenges but they are willing to support their children to become successful learners. Parents want to help their children, but they don't know how to do it. Many lack of mentorship and training.

The potential to transform the lives of ESL families starts when parents can use the English language in order to problem solve important tasks given to them at the time they enroll their students in school. Filling out an enrollment and lunch application, going to have a health checkup, reading and sending notes to school are fundamental requirements that every parent should know how to perform. Many of these families will have to do these tasks time and time again until they find a place to settle. The main reason families immigrate to the USA is to find a better quality of life and educational opportunities and learning new skills is on top of their

priorities. Offering the possibility of fulfilling their personal goal of acquiring the basics of the English language as well as encouraging them to create a positive learning environment at home is the beginning of a successful adaptation to a new country and language. This project is the result of the need of parental involvement and home support for our ESL students in my school system. We have a strong partnership with the community college but we are in need of a class specifically designed for adult newly arrived parents that can learn fundamental English through cognate recognition and a direct use of authentic materials such as receiving and sending messages to teachers during the school year. This class is intended to be taught by community college instructors who know how to teach adult students and scaffold their class instruction at the adult level.

Motivation is also an important factor that I anticipated while planning these classes. The ESL classes for adults will be taught at a local high school and the parents can bring their school age children to school so they can receive tutoring and do homework. This will save them the need to find a babysitter and it is also an opportunity for K-12 students to receive small setting instruction. This program opens many opportunities for the school system to share information to parents that at times is hard to know if they have received and understood the documents sent home. Counseling these families or their students is also beneficial as they often request these services. My hope is that this pilot program can serve as a turning page in our school system. Parents are eager to help their students succeed but the language barrier is stopping them to do so. Teaching adult students with a multilevel educational background is intricate and I foresee some challenges ahead. With this on mind, I would have some bilingual parents that could serve as initial mentors for these newcomer families.

ESL and mainstream teachers can help K-12 students thrive in school but parental involvement is also fundamental for their long term success. An ESL class for adults that emphasizes how the school system works as well as the opportunities that potential students have in college and career readiness programs motivates families to be involved in their students' educational journey. It also helps families keep their initial goal to give their children the opportunity of a better education thus a brighter future.

Appendix

Appendix A: Handouts

Handout 1

Vocabulary

Instructions:

a) In pairs, identify the cognates from this list. Write the Spanish equivalent:

1. Responsibilities _____
2. Rights _____
3. Tax _____
4. Profess _____
5. Law, legal _____
6. Security _____
7. Crime _____
8. Report _____
9. Immigrant _____
10. Obey _____
11. Religion _____
12. Education _____

b) Now, compare your answers with your classmates.

c) What do you like about living in the USA? Mention 3 aspects about your life in ‘

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Handout 2

a) Highlight the cognates from today's vocabulary:

Rights	Responsibilities
Fair treatment by the police and in court	Obey the laws
Personal safety and security	Pay taxes
Legal representation	Report crimes
Emergency medical services	Report accidents
Rights of women and children (domestic abuse)	Protect children
Rights to receive an education	Enroll children in school
Rights to profess a religion (or not)	

b) Choose 5 rights and 5 responsibilities, copy the statement below and draw a picture of each statement:

Rights	Responsibilities
 Example: Right to profess a religion	

Handout 3

a) Complete the following information:

Teacher's information	My information
Name:	My name:

Phone number:	My phone number:
Email address:	Email address:
Best time to contact:	Best time to contact:

b) It is important to stay in touch/contact with my child's teacher because:

• I will know if there is a school delay • I will receive information about homework and grades • I can tell the teacher if my child is sick • I will know if the bus is running late • I will know if the school is closed today (federal day) • (other reason) _____ • (other reason) _____

c) New vocabulary:

1. Find the cognates

2. Write the meaning of the rest of the words, pay attention to your teacher using his phone:

Send the message: _____

Recent message: _____

See all messages: _____

Documents: _____

Help – Talking point team: _____

Read/See conversation: _____

Start conversation: _____

Paper and pencil icon: _____

Personal profile: _____

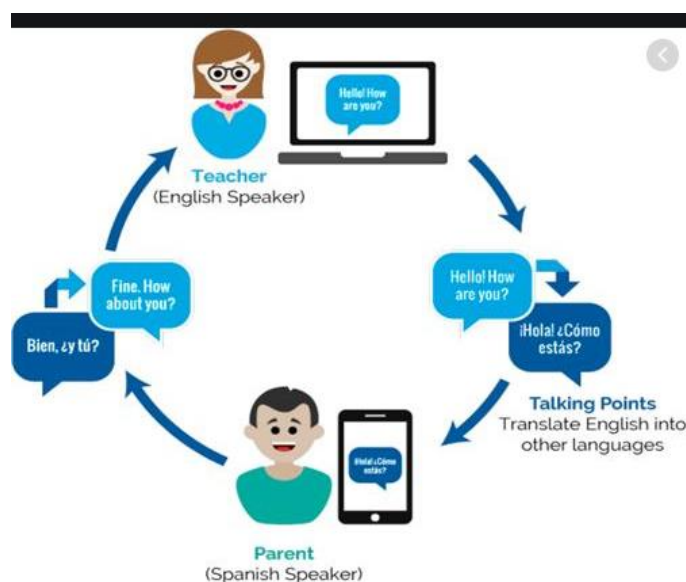
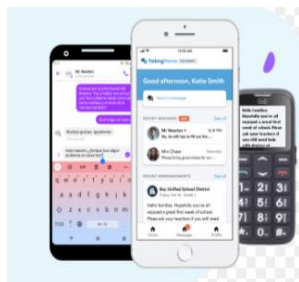
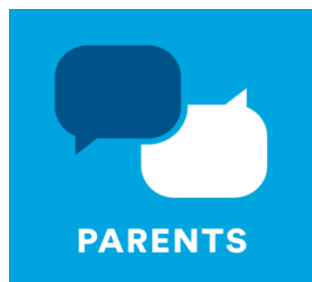
Edit profile: _____

Personalized information: _____

Change the language: _____

Code number: _____

- d) Search the “Talking points” app on the Apple store or Google play on your phone and follow your teacher’s instructions.



Handout 4

- a) Follow the formula “word + ache” to create new nouns. Use the words in the box:

Tooth	Head	Stomach
Back	Ear	

1) Tooth + ache = Toothache

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

- b) New vocabulary:

1. Find the cognates.

2. Look at your teacher and write the meaning on the words.

A fever _____

A cold _____

The flu _____

Nausea _____

Diarrhea _____

Sore throat _____

An infection _____

A rash _____

A cut _____

Dizziness _____

Symptoms _____

A sore throat _____

Handout 5

At the Doctor's

a) Listen to the dialogue and fill in the blanks:

Doctor: Good morning Ms. Jones, what seems to be the _____?

Ms. Jones: Well doctor, I've got a _____ and a bad _____.

I've also got a bad _____.

Doctor: How long have you had these _____?

Ms. Jones: About four days now. And I'm feeling really _____ too.

Doctor: It sounds like you got the _____. Take two _____ every two hours.

You should

also get lots of rest and drink plenty of fluids. If you don't feel _____ in a couple of

days, give me a call.

Ms. Jones: Thank you, doctor.

- b) With your partner, choose 3 symptoms from handout 1 and create a conversation between a doctor and a patient. You will present your conversation to the class.

[illegible]

- c) Exit ticket: Write/text a note to your boss or your child's teacher. Follow the sentence model and fill in the blanks with your own information:

Good morning Boss	Good morning teacher
(Today's date) _____	(Today's date) _____
I'm texting you to let you know that I am not feeling well today. I have a _____. Please excuse my absence today, thank you!	I'm texting you to let you know that my child __(<u>name</u>)__ is not feeling well today. He/ She has a _____. He/ She will
(Your name) _____	

	stay at home today. Please excuse my child's absence today. Thanks! (Your name) _____
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